

SECRETDDP/RMS-69/76

16 April 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: CIA Records Management Board

SUBJECT : Quarterly Report -- Records Center Purge

1. The Records Center Purge in the Clandestine Service continues to be directed towards "non-official" records holdings, i.e., those records which have not been processed into the CS Records System, since they contain the highest percentage which may be destroyed. This is so because of the Agency's unique counterintelligence responsibility assigned to the CS under existing federal law and National Security Council Intelligence Directives, i.e., the collection of information on foreign intelligence and security services, illegal Communist Party activities, or any clandestine activity having a bearing upon the security of the U.S. These CI responsibilities led to the formulation of strict criteria regarding document destruction, not the least of these being a specially tailored OTR course which is required for any CS official engaged in the destruction process of official paper. Destruction is carried out through a painstaking, tedious process beginning with a paper-by-paper review by a qualified "desk" individual prior to a recommendation for destruction and continues through at least two more check points before a document is physically destroyed. Experience has demonstrated that only through such a process is the CS able to maintain a meaningful records collection while assuring that the equities and responsibilities of the Agency in its dealings with the intelligence community are met.

2. Non-official paper, on the other hand, may be reviewed by any responsible officer in the CS and may be destroyed without a paper-by-paper review. Summary destruction of such paper is allowed and encouraged. During the reporting period there were 1057 feet of records reviewed, resulting in the destruction of 230 feet. Since the inception of the purge, 2297 feet of records have been reviewed, resulting in the destruction of 951 feet.

3. A completely revised and comprehensive Records Disposition Schedule has been coordinated with and approved by all necessary offices and should be printed and issued shortly. The Schedule should prove to be helpful in the reduction of office records holdings because it provides retention periods for just about every type of file in the CS. Application of this schedule to present CS records holdings at the Records Center should also assist in the reduction of those holdings.

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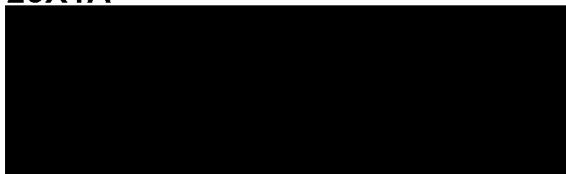
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4. It is worth noting, however, that the CS has had an effective schedule since August of 1964, and the majority of the Directorate's Records Center holdings -- approximately 23,000 feet -- are covered by this schedule. Of the total amount, fewer than 5,000 feet are non-official records, with the remainder having a permanent retention period (OSS and predecessor Agency records) or lesser periods of 10 or 60 years. This means, therefore, that the CS purge to have any significant effect must be directed towards the 5,000 feet of non-official records with short retention periods, i.e., the records which lend themselves to easy destruction. The possibility of lowering retention periods on certain categories of records is also being considered to allow for the earlier removal of additional records.

5. Microfilm and microfiche applications are under study as a means of reducing the space occupied by CS records at the Records Center. It is expected that definite plans and projects will be approved in the near future and that the CS records holdings will be reduced immediately upon filming since this point will be an important part of any recommendation. We are also continuing to encourage CS components to destroy non-official paper at the desk level rather than having it retired to the Records Center. This has proved successful in some cases, with one of the offices reporting the destruction of approximately 200 feet.

6. A problem worth mentioning, and one in which the CS has a vital interest, is that of the lack of a current and meaningful policy on emergency relocation and vital materials. This is a situation which should be corrected, and although the CS is studying the problem, it would seem that the Agency should act in this regard. More specifically, it is felt that the CIA Records Management Board is the appropriate vehicle to initiate action in these important but neglected areas.

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Chief, Records Management Staff

Attachment
CS Records Purge
Activity Chart

Distribution:
Orig & 6 - Addressee
1 - DDP
1 - C/OPSER

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